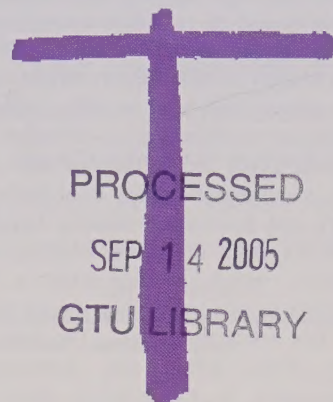




A well-laden truck in rural Nigeria



CHRISTIAN HOPE IN A DARK WORLD

Faith, hope, love abide - teaches Paul; and the greatest is love. Yet, for many in this year 2005 the most difficult is hope. The world view propagated by the news media tempts us to despair. The view is of a violent, terrible world in which populations starve or are otherwise murdered; in which violent crime pays and victims are left to suffer; in which torture is practised with impunity, and war is waged on women and children, old and young - anyone who gets in the way.

Our contributors work, or have worked, in dark places and have nonetheless found signs of hope, the hope which with faith and love helps us to find God's truth in God's world. Can they share that with us?

Signs of Hope

by Alison Tyler

I am writing this just after Easter and am surrounded, not only by the walls and wire of HMP Wormwood Scrubs but also by all the sights and sounds of an English spring in full leaf, flower and song. We are still singing Alleluia on Sunday mornings in Chapel and the

glory of the Resurrection is still resonating in heart, mind and spirit. There are signs of hope all around even within the prison walls and though they are often small they are also vibrant with possibility for the future.

It is a source of continual delight and surprise to me how many of our prisoners practice their faith, as they are entitled by law to do, whilst in prison. Very few of our prisoners register as having no faith at all (fewer than 17%), all are offered the chance to worship and many do so with an attentiveness and commitment that I have not often found outside. Cynics will always say that it is merely a chance to get out of their cells, and not any measure of commitment.

However, once exposed, or re-exposed, to the faiths that they may have dropped out of, surprising numbers of men want to learn more, to follow it up and to be introduced into a supportive faith community when they are released. The disappointment is often that so few faith communities outside have the confidence to want to welcome them back.

A further sign of hope is the present focus of effort within the prison and probation services on resettlement,

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which is the umbrella under which prison chaplains are seeking to develop Community Chaplaincy projects. These are projects which seek to make the links between prisoners being released, their local faith communities, and volunteer mentors from those communities to give support and help in the early days following release. It is, we hope, a way of giving faith communities the confidence and the resources to enable them to welcome ex-offenders back. We are always happy to offer support and advice to faith groups who want to offer welcome, support and hospitality to ex-offenders. In Swansea, Leeds and Feltham to name only three, voluntary funding, local authority money and government funding has been found to start up these exciting new ventures, which should make a real difference to men and women leaving prison with few social resources. The links are made from within the worshipping communities in the prisons, based on connections that the chaplains are making with local faith groups. The most hopeful sign about this work is that the projects are all multi-faith in scope and can be accessed by all. It is a real and practical example of faith communities working together for the good of all our prisoners.

In an increasingly secular world it is another real sign of hope that we are accepted as valuable, useful, trustworthy and integrated into such a secular organisation as the Prison Service.

On Tuesday mornings we have a Communion Service at Wormwood Scrubs, with an extended ministry of the word so that we have the chance to discuss the readings, rather than hear a sermon. Up to 40 prisoners have come for that discussion. The really exciting thing about this is the thoughtful and reflective contributions that the men make. They have obviously thought long and hard about some of the issues they raise and are keen to share their insights or receive new ones. They do not get any incentives offered other than the chance to talk about the faith, to receive Communion and at the end, if there is time, to have a cup of coffee.

As a Christian Chaplain it is a real sign of hope for me that we are working well together with other faith groups to meet as many religious and spiritual needs as we can. We do see ourselves as being both at the leading edge of ministry and at one of the cutting edges of collaborative ministry, out of which real multi-faith working can grow.

In an increasingly secular world it is another real sign of hope that we are accepted as valuable, useful, trustworthy and

integrated into such a secular organisation as the Prison Service. The staff at Wormwood Scrubs welcome us and use us themselves if they have need of spiritual or pastoral care. We are known as confidential sources of support and friendship in an often lonely and very stressful job.

Chaplains are part of all sorts of multidisciplinary teams. We help to provide bereavement support for staff and prisoners, and a comprehensive support system for those at risk of self-harm. As an integrated part of the prison community we collectively contribute to work to reduce drug dependence, facilitate all kinds of resettlement projects, serve on internal committees dealing with a range of issues and assist with drawing up release plans for potentially dangerous men who are about to be released. Our distinctively Christian or faith-based perspective is seen as valuable and appropriate in many different situations - a recognition perhaps of a more holistic view of the whole person taking shape within public services.

Speaking to colleagues it is enormously hopeful that so many of them find the work so rewarding, interesting and even fun. We are in a situation where there is often bereavement, pain and/or violence, meeting very disturbed and dysfunctional people on a regular basis and yet have no difficulty in motivating ourselves to come into work. The people that we meet are often strangers in a foreign land who have come here and offended, as a result of poverty and desperation, rather than from any deliberate criminal intent, sometimes not knowing that their actions are regarded as criminal in this country. There are also many who have multiple experiences of social deprivation, substance abuse, and mental health problems. It is a sign of great hope that Church, society and the Prison Service are becoming able to see these as issues to be addressed, rather than seeing them as matters for retribution alone. There is still a long way to go, but rehabilitation and the renewal of life are becoming real aims of the Service,

There is still a long way to go, but rehabilitation and the renewal of life are becoming real aims of the Service, no longer just the aspirations of the few.

no longer just the aspirations of the few.

As chaplains, we know that we will generally find a high level of mutual care and support amongst our colleagues, a shared desire to serve in the community that we have been placed in, and a completely unlooked-for level of appreciation from those prisoners with whom we work. This would seem to be clear evidence that the Holy Spirit is at work somewhere in the

ministry that we share. For we are each (usually) aware that it is never 'my ministry' that we are engaged in, but our part of God's ministry that is unfolding in our work daily.

f

Alison Tyler is an Anglican chaplain at Wormwood Scrubs Prison.

franciscan

(published three times a year)

Subscriptions for 2005

United Kingdom	£6
Europe & Surface (outside Europe)	£7
Air Mail (outside Europe)	£8
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Ontario to Islamabad

by Thomas Anthony SSF

Brother Thomas Anthony SSF was recently serving as the chaplain to Anglicans in St Petersburg, Russia. In 1991 he left Cambridge, England, where he had spent seven years as vicar of St Bene't's, and since then has worked for the

Anglican church in places as diverse as the Diocese of Europe, Syria, Pakistan, Canada (a return visit) and northern Africa. He provides these anecdotes as signs of hope.

Timmins, Northern Ontario, 1970

A newish, rather diffident priest of the cathedral parish makes his weekly visit to the General Hospital. Unlike British ones, Canadian hospitals have no paid chaplains. He checks for any new patients who have put themselves down as Anglicans. They are often native people, sent down from further north.

'We are Christians', she says, simply and sincerely, 'and every day we pray: "Give us this day our daily bread." We ask God to provide, and he does.'

He finds a lone elderly Inuit woman in an isolation room. The hospital has no interpreter, and according to the nurse her condition is incurable. On seeing the clerical collar her face brightens, and suddenly the shy curate finds himself embraced. Both pray, she in Inuit, he in English. The only word both understand is Jesus. She relaxes, visibly and tangibly.

Two days later he goes back to see her, full of curiosity - but finds the bed empty. She has been sent home the previous day, with no sign of illness, the nurse informs him.

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, early 1990's

The civil war that ousted the communist government of Menghistu has reduced the population of Ethiopia to abject poverty. Yet hospitality remains a priority, as so often among the very poor. I am invited to have coffee and, as anybody familiar with the Horn of Africa knows, this is not a casual event but an afternoon-long ceremony. With the incense burning the ritual becomes quasi-religious. There's just the hostess and her young adult son. The husband has been a casualty of the war. The house is constructed of poles and polythene.

The second round of coffee has been served. The son, David, acts as interpreter. The conversation, as it would sooner or later, turns to the present. Their own house has been let and the rent is their only source of income, apart from the odd jobs David is able to do from time to time. There is a dignity about these two people, mother and son. 'How do you remain so cheerful?', I ask. 'We are Christians', she says, simply and sincerely, 'and every day we pray: "Give us this day our daily bread." We ask God to

provide, and he does.'

Tangier, summer 2002

On the day school opens for a new academic year I watch children, clean and well dressed for the occasion, as they make their way to school. They are also watched, with patent envy, by bunches of street urchins: no such luxury as school for them!

The Sisters of Charity have a home for abandoned children where they care for some of the smaller ones, before they too turn into petrol sniffing street children.

A British couple are often in Morocco on business. They take an interest in the work of the Sisters and frequently organize donations to the home. One sickly baby girl in the home catches their attention, and once back in the UK they convince doctors in a hospital to treat the child. She is then (illegally) taken to England for treatment, and eventually returned to Morocco. It took that one couple with faith and determination to give this child hope for life. Later on they manage somehow to smuggle out of the country and adopt a little boy, now the joy of their life.

Like the author of Psalm 77 I recall the good things that have happened, and, lo and behold, a soldier comes in with a sandwich, a can of beer and a packet of cigarettes. He affirms my sense of hope.

Bosnia, 1997

Sometimes life seems to fall apart on you. Travelling in Bosnia during the war there I was just a mile from the city of Sarajevo. The going had been good and I expected to be let through the military checkpoint, but no.

I am told to stay there, no reason why given, and no indication for how long... indignation gives way to frustration: I was so close, but now, *splat!* all my plans are dashed. All I have with me to read is a copy of *The Guardian*, and that was old when I bought it in Split. Ennui takes over, that cocktail of boredom and anger. Eventually, too tired of indulging in emotions, I lie down on the bunk bed. Tiredness becomes reverie and other episodes of my travels so far come to

mind, and I remember people's generosity and hospitality and I realise that this episode will pass. Like the author of Psalm 77 I recall the good things that have happened and, lo and behold, a soldier comes in with a sandwich, a can of beer and a packet of cigarettes. He affirms my sense of hope.

I am taken to Sarajevo by truck in the morning, and I am none the worse for the incident.

Our contributions to 'missionary' societies do not disappear into people's pockets. Here, there's real Christian love and faith in action.

Islamabad, summer 2004

The previous year there had been attacks on Christians, including St Thomas' church, and security was strict. In 2004 things were a lot quieter, but Pakistan is a volatile country where even Muslims attack Muslims.

Islamabad is a new city, streets are wide, houses modern, gardens very green. The visitor does not notice (and is not meant to notice) the high walls that enclose some areas: these are 'the colonies', where menials and other poor people are housed. Many of them are Christians. True, many Christians in Pakistan belong to the middle class, but many more are descendants of low-caste Hindus, poor agricultural workers who have drifted to the new rich capital.

I am taken on visits to some of these. There is a lot of self help going on. Doctors and health workers teach hygiene and other health matters, there are classes for basic skills, literacy and handicrafts. All this is undertaken under the auspices of the Church of Pakistan, with moral and financial support from churches in Europe and elsewhere. Our contributions to 'missionary' societies do not disappear into people's pockets. Here,

Continued on page 5



Thomas Anthony SSF is currently resident at Glasshampton.

The Light Shines in the Darkness and the Darkness has Never Extinguished it

by David Jardine SSF



I have had a picture on the wall of my office for a number of years of Assistant Governor Eddie Jones. He was a colleague of mine during the years that I worked as a chaplain in Crumlin Road Prison in Belfast. Eddie had been in the Irish Guards during the war and afterwards joined the Northern Ireland prison service. By the time I was appointed as chaplain in 1975 Eddie was already a very experienced man. Anything that could ever happen in a prison Eddie had seen many times over. If I ever needed advice he would give it to me in a completely confidential and trustworthy way. No one else ever knew what we had discussed.

On other occasions he would send for me and say, 'There's a man just into the base who comes from Limavady. He has been given an eight year sentence and he's registered Church of Ireland. I think he would like a visit from you.' Prisoners never knew the concern Eddie showed in the background.

Forgiveness is very important...

Forgiveness releases that anger and bitterness and keeps the channels open between ourselves and God.

In September, 1979, Eddie was on his way back to work after lunch at home. While he was stopped at the traffic lights close to the prison the IRA came up and murdered him. He was one of five officers from Crumlin Road murdered during a three month period. Because of the circumstances those funerals were always very emotional occasions. For the families it was devastating. Every year in November the Prison Service still holds a memorial service. One of Eddie's sons told me that some of his brothers, twenty five years later, still cannot attend that service, the hurt is so deep.

I found in the early years of the Troubles that emotionally the situation did not impact so much on me. But as the years went on and we were exposed to more and more suffering on a daily basis, that became very upsetting and draining.

What saved me was my faith in God. He

gave me strength at difficult times and the conviction that things could be different. Because of my faith I never lost hope that one day the Troubles would end. I used to go into the chapel in the friary in Belfast on my own and walk round and round for an hour, praying for Northern Ireland. The vast majority of people in the Province, the longer the Troubles went on, were convinced that violence would never end in their lifetime. But I never lost hope.

I also saw some remarkable answers to prayer. David Hamilton was converted in his prison cell on January 29, 1980. A Loyalist paramilitary, David was serving his third long term sentence. He attributed his conversion to the prayers of an old woman of eighty three called Annie Beggs. The day David was sentenced she met his mother coming away from the court house. Seeing how distressed she was Annie promised to pray every day for David. A year later almost to the day he was converted, completely out of the blue, in his prison cell. Now pastor of a large independent church in Manchester, David has been in big demand as a speaker for the last twenty five years all over the world. I thank the Lord that during the long dark times He gave me a conviction that no situation is beyond hope when we can bring it before Him in prayer.

Forgiveness is also very important. During the years of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, and indeed right up to this day, it is easy to become angry. Forgiveness releases that anger and bitterness and keeps the channels open between ourselves and God. There are many wonderful examples of people who have suffered and have forgiven. Michael McGoldrick is a Roman Catholic man whose

son was murdered in 1996. At the funeral Michael was given the grace to speak to the TV cameras and say that he forgave the people who had murdered his only son. Annie Harkness is a Protestant woman who lost both a son and a daughter. When I met her in 1992 I expected to find someone who was either angry or depressed. Instead I met a lady who was very calm. She said that she could only take this attitude because of her relationship with Jesus. 'Nobody can serve two masters' she said, 'You can't have within you both love and hate at the same time.'

These people, and many others, are for me heroes of forgiveness. Yet it is important for all of us, who have not suffered at the same level, to forgive those who have angered us. Bitterness destroys us but forgiveness restores peace to our minds and a lightness to our spirits.

Saying sorry is also crucial. That allows us to receive God's forgiveness and peace. I have been influenced by the teaching of Bishop Festo Kivengere from Uganda on this theme. He said that the Christians who nurtured him in the faith taught him that if a relationship is strained or broken the quick way to bring healing is to go and apologise for the part we played in the breaking of the relationship. I believe that in the Northern Ireland situation there are four groups who need to say sorry - Northern Irish Protestants, Northern Irish Catholics, people in the Republic, and the English.

Saying sorry is also crucial. That allows us to receive God's forgiveness, and peace.

About three or four years ago I felt that the Lord was asking me, when I spoke to Roman Catholic gatherings, to say that I was sorry about the sins of the Protestant people against the Catholic people. I was aware that Protestants are not the only people to have transgressed but the sin of others is not my responsibility.

I thought about this for a while. I wanted to be sure that it really was God who was

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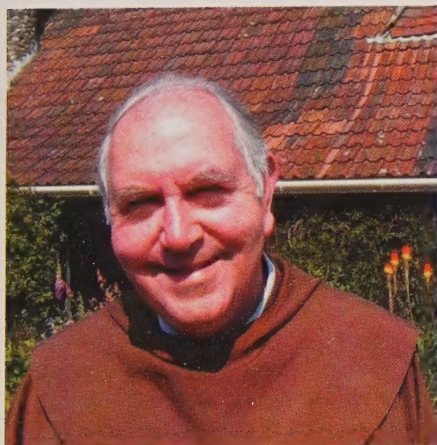
speaking. At last, in Christian Unity Week, 2004, I was ready. In St Anthony's Roman Catholic Church in Craigavon I said I was sorry about the sins of the Protestant people in Northern Ireland and apologised for my own prejudice and one-sidedness. I have done this many times since. Occasionally an individual has thanked me. Once a priest responded by also apologising. Mostly no-one says anything, even though I feel that most people are pleased. On Wednesday,

*I thank the Lord that
during the long dark times
He gave me a conviction
that no situation is beyond
hope when we can bring it
before Him in prayer.*

April 27, 2005 I was speaking at a healing service in a Roman Catholic church just outside Belfast. There were about 300 in the congregation. I began as usual by saying I was sorry about the sins of Protestant people. Instantaneously the whole congregation burst into applause. That was a moving moment for me. When I sat down the priest thanked me personally, and then got up and apologised publicly on behalf of the Roman Catholic people. I believe the Lord was pleased.

I am glad to be able to report that the situation in Northern Ireland is so much better today than it was before the ceasefires in 1994. But even in the darkest times, and there were plenty of them, hope was kept alive in me through my relationship with God. Walking close to Him was absolutely essential.

I am also deeply grateful for the gifts of forgiveness and repentance, which have often restored my peace and healed relationships. Even in the toughest circumstances we have to hold on to the fact that Jesus is the light of the world. That light still shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never extinguished it. *f*



David Jardine SSF is currently involved with Divine Healing Ministries in Belfast, with a commitment to prayer and reconciliation.

franciscan

is published by the European Province
of the First Order of the Society of
Saint Francis, a Religious Order
in the Anglican Communion.
The Society of Saint Francis
is committed to follow Christ
in the way of Saint Francis of Assisi,
in humility, love and joy.

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St Francis House, 113 Gillott Road
Birmingham, B16 0ET UK

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Printed at *The Friary Press*, Dorchester

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there's real Christian love and faith in action.
Narva, Estonia, spring 2005

This is the border of Estonia and Russia. I am meant to get my visa for Russia at the consulate here. It was supposed to be all arranged: 'Just go to the desk and show your passport, and all will be ready'. All I need to do next is walk across the border one kilometre away, where a driver will be waiting to take me to St Petersburg. Of course communism is gone but bureaucracy is alive and well. After several trips there, in the end I find that I am 78 euros short of the required fee. I feel helpless and hopeless like never before.

I tell the hotel receptionist the story. She is sympathetic, and offers to lend me the money. After some hesitation I accept her offer, not having any other recourse. She insists that kindness will be paid with kindness.

My troubles are not over yet. I cross the border without difficulty and am relieved to find myself in the Russian border town of Ivangorod. I should have known better: there is neither car nor driver. After several hours I give up the wait. I manage to convince a taxi driver that I have money in St Petersburg. Two hours and I am home.

The poor people in a colony in Islamabad may not be articulate about their faith, the young woman in Narva may not even call herself a Christian, and the taxi driver's faith may not go beyond having a religious medal or two on his dashboard. Trust, like faith and love, is risky. Often it's going to be like walking that swaying first version of London's Millennium Bridge - you wonder why you ever started. Perseverance shows that trust is justified and hope fulfilled. *f*

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A July 12 bonfire heap in Belfast, ready to celebrate the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. David Jardine and his colleagues work to encourage nonviolent celebrations of culture on both sides of the religious divide in Northern Ireland.



Torture: A Moral Contagion

by Chas Raws

There can be few more distressing examples of man's inhumanity to man than the practice of torture, and those of us who have campaigned against it or witnessed its pernicious effects must sometimes be reduced to despair by the apparent ineffectiveness of our efforts in the face of its global spread.

The latest step down the moral ladder has been the justification of torture as a weapon in the so-called war against terrorism and I write at a time when the House of Lords has agreed to give a ruling later in the year on the Appeal Court's decision that evidence extracted under torture is admissible in British courts - provided that the torture was not inflicted by a British agent. I remain dumbfounded by this judgement which I find morally repugnant and alien to every concept of justice and humanity which I believed to be the birthright of western civilisation. The acceptance of torture as an instrument of control and interrogation by the US administration and now by the British legal system is indeed an example of moral contagion.

Torture is both a potent symbol for - and the ultimate expression of - the abuse of power.

Torture is used for various purposes: to extract information, to punish individuals, to humiliate political or religious opponents, to terrorise society at large. It is both a potent symbol for - and the ultimate expression of - the abuse of power. It has been used by political and religious authorities for all of these purposes. Very shortly after the foundation of Amnesty International in 1961, torture became a prime focus for its campaigning efforts. The development of international human rights law since then has been impressive but the obscenity of torture

continues in spite of all the mechanisms set up to deal with it, to remove immunity for torturers and their masters and to gain acceptance for measures to outlaw it. Almost every member-government of the United Nations has ratified the Convention Against Torture and many include safeguards against torture in their constitutions, yet the use of torture is recorded in about two thirds of them. Dictatorships give way to democracies but torture persists. The European Convention on Human Rights has specific mechanisms for inspection and complaint, yet every year torture is reported in several EU member countries.

I have worked for the abolition of torture as the founder of an Amnesty International Group twenty-four years ago and a member - until recently chairman - of Action by Christians Against Torture (ACAT-UK). I have also met victims of torture among the asylum seekers dispersed to Merseyside who come for help to our 'open door' drop-in centre in Liverpool, as well as former prisoners of conscience from the Philippines and East Timor. I suppose the first sources of hope are the amazing resilience of these damaged people and the single-minded determination with which our staff and volunteers set about finding solutions to their problems, as well as the quality of friendship which they offer them. Their commitment is often motivated by their religious faith which is closely linked to a deep sense of our common humanity. There is a recognition that the suffering of those who reach us, both in their home countries and in the expected haven of Britain, is an offence against the inherent dignity of every human being.

Torture has been called 'the desecration of the human spirit'. The most powerful speakers I have heard on the subject have insisted on this spiritual dimension of the problem: the damage done to the spiritual well-being of society at large - local, national and global - by the deliberate infliction of severe pain by one human being on another. The Quaker Statement on the Abolition of Torture, issued in 1999, refers to torture as 'a profound evil, causing unimaginable human suffering and corrupting the spiritual and political life of the human family...'. I am challenged by the commitment made as long ago as 1976 by a world gathering of Quakers that 'we will spare no effort until the obscenity of torture is brought to an end'. There are several complementary responses

to this evil. The first is represented by The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture which makes available the resources of many healing disciplines to victims of torture who find their way to Britain. From physiotherapists to psychotherapists, physicians, nurses and counsellors, a dedicated team of staff and volunteers offers its expertise towards restoring as far as possible the physical and mental health of those who have been harmed by the experience of torture. The Medical Foundation was set up by Helen Bamber, one of the first members of Amnesty International, who grasped the need to give practical help as well as campaigning against the evil of torture. It has been said that someone who has been tortured will always remain someone who has been tortured - a full restoration of human wholeness is not possible. But The Medical Foundation works miracles, often over long periods, to remove as many as possible of the ill-effects.

The first sources of hope for those who have been tortured, are the amazing resilience of these damaged people and the single-minded determination with which our staff and volunteers set about finding solutions to their problems, as well as the quality of friendship which they offer them.

The second response is the ongoing campaign to eliminate torture from the practice of armies, police and prison staff in so many countries. This entails seeking the genuine commitment of governments leading to positive training on the one hand and proper punishment on the other. Immunity has been a major obstacle to effective progress and, as in Chile, outgoing dictatorships have often sought to bind their democratic successors with guarantees of amnesty for all those implicated in human rights abuses including torture, disappearances and extra-judicial killings. However inadequate the effectiveness of international law may be in the face of such manoeuvring, it remains a sign of hope that systems and structures do exist and have proved their worth on many occasions. It has to be encouraging that Presidents Milosevic and Pinochet and their like can no longer thumb their noses at the humanitarian ideals of the international community as represented by the United Nations and its agencies.

Finally, for people of faith there is prayer - and for Christians the example of Christ who



Chas Raws is a Quaker and recently retired Chair of the UK branch of Action by Christians Against Torture.

Minister's Letter

Brother Samuel SSF
Minister Provincial of the First Order Brothers,
European Province, writes:

Dear Friends,

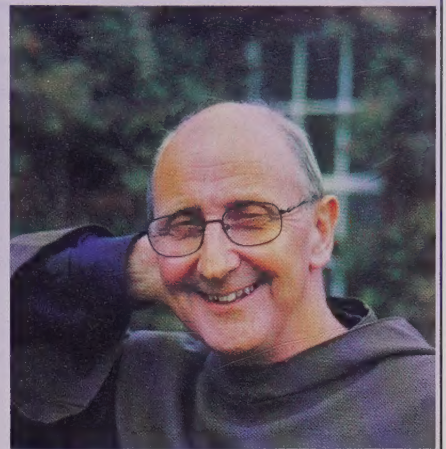
The past several months have seen the Anglican Communion enter a period of deepening crisis. With the publication of the Windsor Report on Communion in October 2004 and the subsequent request by the Anglican Primates earlier this year to the representatives of the North American Churches to withdraw from meetings of the Anglican Consultative Council, we face the possibility, perhaps even the probability, of a formally divided Communion. The crisis has been focussed around the authority of individual Anglican provinces to make decisions about the consecration of a bishop in a gay relationship and the blessing of same sex unions, but there are other underlying issues causing division: the relation of the Church to its surrounding culture, the place of the ministry of women and the appropriate understanding and use of the Scriptures.

In SSF we are not unaffected by all this; not only do we live and work in provinces of the Communion which have radically different perspectives on these issues, but within our Society we sometimes find ourselves on opposite sides of the debate from our own brothers and sisters. There are occasions when members of a house, with sadness and pain, are unable to receive communion together, and there hangs over those of us who are members of the Church of England, the question of

what would happen to our life together if a 'third province' is established.

Against this background we hear again the voice which called to Francis in the ruined church of San Damiano outside the walls of Assisi, 'Repair my house'. Francis set to work with stones and helpers but soon discovered a wider mission to summon the Church to renewal in the life of the Gospel. In this mission, which we also share, we have two particular Franciscan 'gifts' which we inherit from Francis himself. The first is the gift of brotherhood/sisterhood; no matter how much we may disagree with each other on issues of theology and ecclesiology we are committed to a deep respect for the other, an attentiveness to one another's needs and well-being, and a desire to work together for the sake of the Gospel in every way that is possible. This often takes the form of small, humble acts of kindness and generosity; a refusal to undermine or denigrate the other, a willingness to bear with difference even when it makes life difficult, and above all a sense of proportion - and of humour!

The other gift is Francis' very clear commitment to the Church, to the life of the Body of Christ and to those called to responsibility and authority within it. Despite the corruption of clergy and his own rejection of any situation of power in the Church, Francis determined to work within rather than without the institution; his relation to Jesus Christ bound him in



humble, reverent fellowship with all creatures, and most especially with those who were baptised in Christ. Likewise, we ourselves are bound into the Body; the failings of the Church are essentially our own failings. We work for deeper understanding, for peace and for reconciliation; we seek to cross boundaries between traditions and we try to avoid being caught up in the language of victim-hood and distrust which so often characterises the debate; and we pray for those called to leadership in the Church at this time, most especially Rowan, Archbishop of Canterbury; may God give him and us wisdom, patience, persistence, and the joy of the Kingdom.

Pax et bonum - Peace and all good.

Samuel SSF

Continued from page 6

submitted to torture as his persecutors prepared him for death. Action by Christians Against Torture (ACAT-UK) adopted the slogan *A Powerhouse of Prayer*, asking members to remember in constant prayer the victims, their families and their communities and to pray for those who order, inflict or tolerate the torture of their fellow human beings. After centuries of inhumanity and the failure of modern civilisation after the Enlightenment to turn its back once and for all on the degradation of torture, it is difficult to be optimistic about bringing it to an end in the foreseeable future, but Christian hope does not depend on optimism but on faith in a deeper reality. So, while the number of Christians who have rallied to the cause of abolition is considerably smaller than those who campaigned to abolish slavery, we remain heartened by the enduring enthusiasm of one of ACAT's patrons, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, who experienced the effects of sustained prayer during the dark days of apartheid and who believes that no evil is more powerful than the force of love. *f*

Theme Prayer



O God,
who set before us the great hope
that your Kingdom shall come on earth
and taught us to pray for its coming:
give us grace to discern the signs of its dawning
and to work for the perfect day
when the whole world shall reflect your glory,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

CSF's Centre

(1) The annual European Province's Sisters' Meeting at the end of February became the main focus for the Centenary celebrations, especially as CSF's Foundation Day anniversary occurs on February 25. This year's Meeting included our CSF sisters from the USA and (2) the two sisters of the Korean Franciscan Sisterhood, who have a mutual support covenant with the Community of St Francis. As CSF's story has been associated with the East End of London through most of its life, it was fitting to have all the sisters staying at St Katharine's Foundation, Limehouse. (3 and 4) This provided a ready base for a pilgrimage to the sites of former residences or churches associated with CSF, though because of their present uses, it was a matter of simply viewing most of them from the outside.

(5) Jennifer Chan's Profession later that day, which included a Chinese Tea Ceremony, was a further reminder of the present international flavour of CSF and of the challenge to us as an English-based religious order to engage appropriately with other countries and cultures. The Eucharist at Southwark Cathedral on 26 February was very well supported by our SSF brothers, Tertiaries, Companions and friends of the Community. (6) A banner which included all the names of those who are or had been sisters over the century was hung on a pillar, and one young person checked them thoroughly to see whether she would be the first sister with her baptismal name, though that will be some years away! The play *Clarevision*, written by Michael Wicherek and dedicated to the Community of St Francis was performed on the Sunday afternoon. It explores various aspects of vocation and discernment of God's call. The invited audience enjoyed both the play and a stimulating discussion with the writer and cast afterwards. (7) A service which included a Commissioning for Mission concluded a joyful weekend.

(8 and 9) At Compton Durville's Open Day on 28 May, friends who live more locally to them joined to continue to give thanks to God for CSF. Bishop Peter Price gave thoughtful presentations in his sermon and in an informal session in the afternoon. (10) A reunion involving some 13 former sisters, also held at Compton Durville, in mid-June, occasioned much hilarity and was valued as a reminder of the link with all those who have lived among us and whose presence continues with us in many ways still.

The Community of St Francis is thankful to God that we have so much to celebrate in this centenary year, and extend our thanks also to all those who have helped to make our celebrations so joyful and memorable.



Beverley and Gina in the pilgrimage coach.



Beverley cutting a cake kindly given by the local bakers.



y Celebrations



2
Jemma KFS presents Joyce with a 'good luck purse' from Korea.



3
The Church of Our Most Holy Redeemer, Clerkenwell, where we ate our picnic lunch - Jennie, Jenny Tee Chris, Teresa, Christine James and Elizabeth.



6



7



Bishop Peter Price



10

From Left to Right: Liz Lowry, Hannah Ward, Jill Lightfoot, Judith Hubbard-Jones, Sr Jannafer CSF, Sr Hilary CSF, Mary Newby, Sr Elizabeth CSF, Sr Jennie CSF, Carol Smith, Skeena Bowen-Colthurst, Mary Hardman, Eelri Walles, Sr Phyllis CSF, Kate Sneade, Judith Daley, Anne Reid, Sr Nan CSF, Jean Malcolm.

SSF and Cambridge -

The End of a Chapter: 1939 - 2005

Yes, the year war broke out - indeed, the month war broke out - Brothers Denis, Douglas and Ronald arrived at that substantial house in Lady Margaret Road to be joined almost immediately by some refugees from London and to begin a ministry which was to continue until this issue of franciscan reaches you. Douglas was there briefly to fill a gap caused by bereavement (Gilbert's father had died) - soon they were joined by Arthur and Gilbert.

Within a few months it became clear that the ministry of the brothers was welcome in wartime Cambridge - a large congregation attended the Sung Eucharist in the church of St Edward, King and Martyr (kindly lent by its chaplain), and at the house the Sunday afternoon gathering attracted upwards of fifty people.



The main entrance to St Bene't's Church.

In 1945, the year which saw the end of the war, Denis became priest in charge of St Bene't's - about 100 yards from St Edward's - and the next year, vicar. However, his presence was needed at the friary in Dorset in 1948 and he was replaced by Lothian whose name is linked with St Bene't's by generations of those who loved and valued his ministry.

Other brothers who should be mentioned in this brief survey are Barnabas, SSF's claim to fame in the academic world, who taught for many years in the Divinity Faculty before migrating to Manchester where he held the John Rylands chair; Michael, that piper of the student world whose travels often took him away but whose ordination followed studies at Westcott House and led eventually to five years in Cornwall as Bishop of St Germans. In 1985 he 'retired' to the Cambridge Friary to be Minister General - but not to Lady Margaret Road, for in 1967 the lease on that property expired, and the friars moved from premises big enough to be shared with some homeless men to the cramped quarters of 15, Botoiph Lane - three

bedsits, kitchen, common room, bathroom, and two tiny guest rooms. Another brother who should be mentioned is Edgar, who became the first chaplain of the Arthur Rank Hospice for the dying, and whose caring ministry is frequently mentioned even 20 years after he left Cambridge.

Lothian died after only three years as vicar and was succeeded by Brother Martin, who was vicar from 1971 until 1985, when he moved to Scunthorpe, though he returned to Cambridge in 1997, and is now priest-in-charge of St. Clement's church. Thomas Anthony became the parish priest of St. Bene't's in 1985, and Anselm in 1992, followed by Samuel in 2000.



Martin Philip at the sharing of the Peace in St Bene't's.

Since the Community began its work in Cambridge many brothers have shared in the ministry for varying periods of time. Individual brothers have made differing contributions, according to their own abilities. Some have been involved in the University, both in pastoral and academic roles. Some have been involved in the work of the Cambridge Cyrenians amongst homeless people. In more recent times there has also been involvement in the chaplaincy team working amongst asylum seekers at the detention centre at Oakington. Many homeless people come to the Friary door for tea and sandwiches, and others also with needs which the brothers try to meet.

Central to all this work the brothers maintained the regular round of prayer and



The closing group of brothers outside the friary in St Botoiph's Lane: Roger Alexander, Samuel, Martin and Martin Philip.

praise, with the daily Eucharist and Evening Prayer at St. Bene't's, and the other offices in the small chapel within the House.

Over the years the Cambridge Friary has helped to make the Community known to large numbers of University students and residents of the city. Several Tertiaries and Companions are among the congregation of St. Bene't's, and it is hoped that the church will continue its Franciscan ethos under new leadership.

The brothers wish to thank all who have supported them and who have helped to make their life so abundantly fruitful and happy. f



Martin with some of the St Clement's congregation.

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The Old Parsonage, 168 Wroslyn Road, **Freeland**, Witney, Oxon OX29 8AQ ☎ (01993) 881227

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Douglas House, Chinatown, **Lae**, PO Box 3411, Morobe Province ☎ & fax: PNG 472 1842

All Saints' Friary, **Dipoturu**, PO Box 78, Popondetta 241, Oro Province

Saint Mary of the Angels Friary, **Haruro**, PO Box 78, Popondetta 241, Oro Province ☎ PNG 329 7060

Saint Margaret's Friary, **Katerada**, PO Box 78, Popondetta 241, Oro Province

Saint Francis Friary, Koke, PO Box 1103, **Port Moresby**, NCD ☎ & fax: PNG 320 1499

Philip Friary, **Ukaka**, PO Box 22, Alotau, Milne Bay Province

SOLOMON ISLANDS

St Francis Friary, PO Box 7, **Auki**, Malaita Province ☎ 40031

La Verna Friary / Little Portion, **Hautambu**, PO Box 519, Honiara, Guadalcanal

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San Damiano Friary, Diocese of Hanuato'o, **Kira Kira**, Makira Ulawa Province ☎ 50031

St Bonaventure Friary, **Kohimarama** Theological College, PO Box 519, Honiara, Guadalcanal

Holy Martyrs Friary, Luisalo, PO Box 50, Lata, **Temotu** Province

An extensive range of Franciscan books and pamphlets are available from the

Franciscan International Study Centre,
Giles Lane, Canterbury, Kent
CT2 7NA

For a booklist, contact them at the above address or

Tel: 01227 769 349
Fax: 01227 768 648

email: info@franciscans.ac.uk
www.franciscans.ac.uk

Unfortunately, Church and Blindness is currently unable to supply franciscan on audiotape but hopes to resume this service soon.

The booklet commonly called

THE ORDO 2006
for
The Daily Office SSF

is available from:

**The Ordo, St Francis Friary,
Hilfield, Dorchester, Dorset
DT2 7BE**

**Price 2 first class stamps each
(plus a stamped, addressed, C6
envelope, please!)**

**Request for contributions for a
Franciscan prayer book**

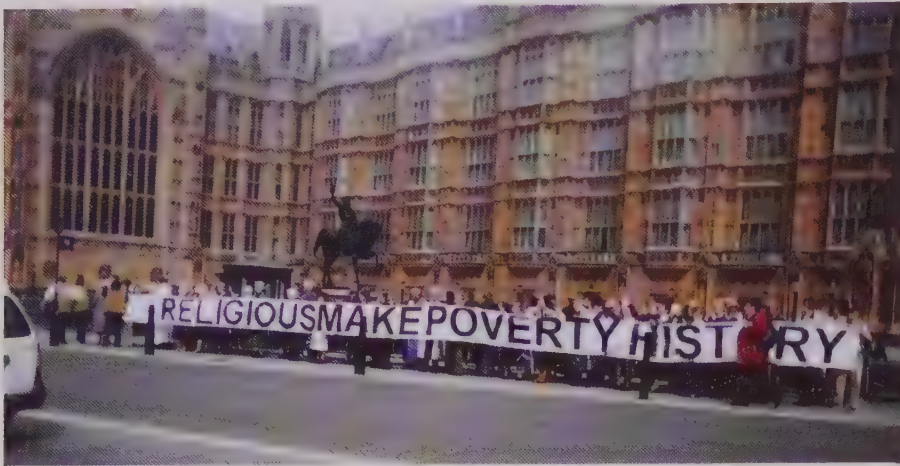
St. Anthony Messenger Press seeks personal, original compositions such as reflections, poetry, meditations or prayers inspired by Saints Francis and Clare or other Franciscans and that reflect Franciscan emphases.

The word count should be limited to less than 500 words.
Closing date 1 November 2005

If possible, text to be sent as MS Word files or in e-mails to Paula Pearce sfo:
email: paula@brabourne.plus.com
or by conventional post at
The Franciscan International Study Centre
Giles Lane Canterbury CT2 7NA

For more details on the type of content contact Paula Pearce as above or The Editor of *franciscan*

Community Routes



The lobbyists make their message known outside the Palace of Westminster.

◆◆ Make Poverty History Lobby

A small group of Brothers and Sisters took part in a lobby of Parliament on 18 May.

The event, which was attended by over 1,000 members of different religious orders, was organised by the aid agency CAFOD, in conjunction with the Justice and Peace desk of the Conference of Religious. The day began with an assembly in the Methodist Central Hall where speakers with experience of working alongside some of the world's poorest communities gave the lobbyists some insight into their situation. The congregation then made their way to the Houses of Parliament where, after queuing outside to go through security checks, they gathered in diocesan groups in Westminster Hall to request audiences with their MPs.

Many MPs came, listened courteously and attentively to the arguments and requests for action and promised to write letters encouraging further action to cancel debts, increase aid and end unfair trade practices.



The CSF and SSF contingent at the parliamentary lobby: Nan, Jonas Balugna, Christine James, Hugh, Jennie, Edmund and Gina. the photo was taken by Austin.

The day ended with a service in St Margaret's, Westminster.

◆◆ All Change at Hilfield

Following the Brothers' Extraordinary Chapter in January, reported in this column previously, a reduction is to be made in the size of the Friary at Hilfield. It has been decided to give up the four separate houses nearest to the cemetery, which include the Guest House. It is also intended to dispose of some of the land around the friary, both the fields and the woodlands. The brothers are currently exploring with others about alternative uses for the houses which will become vacant and for the land. The Guest House will close at the end of October this year.

The brothers will live and work in the complex of buildings around the courtyard which includes the chapel, shop, Giles House, recreation room, library, Leo House, and St Francis House where the refectory is situated.

At the reduced Friary complex the brothers will still be able to welcome individuals and parties of day visitors for quiet days, PCC away days, or for special programmed events, Third Order and Companions days.

They hope to provide hospitality to those wishing to stay overnight, though on a smaller scale than in the present Guest House.

The brothers also hope to continue their ministry with people in need of support and short

term accommodation in partnership with the Government scheme 'Supporting People'; at present they have five rooms set aside for this ministry.

The community is grateful for friendship and encouragement in the past, and asks for continued prayers and support for the life at Hilfield now and in the future.

◆◆ Justice and Peace Links

The Roman Catholic Religious Leaders Conference sponsors an ecumenical religious conference which helps to raise awareness of issues of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) among religious orders. **Hugh** attends on behalf of SSF, and **Jennie** for CSF. **Jennie** writes:

I have found that being the JPIC representative of CSF has given me a deeper understanding of the complexities of the issues that come under this heading. I contribute to a prayer board by the chapel at Compton Durville and maintain a folder of more in-depth information so that the other sisters can learn more about topics which interest them. It is good, if not comfortable, to be more informed. I also attend the South Somerset Peace Group which meets monthly in Ilminster.

I have attended three JPIC conferences since I have been CSF's representative. The first was 'Salt of the Earth', on ecology, the second was entitled 'Sow Justice, Reap Peace', which was about issues like trade justice, and was instrumental in initiating the Lobby of Parliament by religious. The 2005 Conference was 'Not for Sale' and looked at human trafficking, especially for the sex trade. A speaker from CHASTE - Churches Alert to Sex Trafficking Across Europe was the main speaker, and the film, 'My Name is Lilya' was shown.

I was pleased to be able to attend the Religious Lobby of Parliament, which I found was an inspiring occasion. I was further encouraged soon after the lobby, to receive a written response from my MP who I had talked to about the issues of debt relief, fair trade, and more and better aid, indicating that he had taken the action he said he would.

◆◆ Anglicans at the Third Order Regular General Assembly

Colin Wilfred writes:

Sister **Joyce** and I had the privilege of representing the brothers and sisters of the First Order of SSF at the International

General Assembly of the Third Order Regular in Assisi in May. The assembly brings together every four years representatives of 380 Franciscan Congregations (this time including 104 Superiors General) with approximately one hundred thousand members world-wide. We were made very welcome as a part of the Franciscan family.



The last four vicars of St Bene't's, Cambridge: **Martin** (1971-85), **Thomas Anthony** (1985-91), **Samuel** (2001-2005) and **Anselm** (1992-2000).

to St. Mary of the Angels where St. Francis set up the first friary around the little stone chapel and where he died.

Beside the business, the discussion theme was 'How the life of the Holy Trinity inspires our mission of peace as Franciscans'. Many good things were said and a few quotes stick in my mind:-

"Every community needs the pray-ers who sustain the life, the do-ers who prompt us to action and the dreamers who give us the vision".

"We are a multinational - for change, justice and peace".

"None is so poor that they cannot share".

"Those who dream in the daytime are the dangerous ones" (D.H.Lawrence).

◆◆ Stand Up For Jesus

This was the theme of the Caister 2005 conference, organised by Bishop Lindsay Urwin and attended by five SSF brothers and a number of Religious from other communities. The conference looked at the

The Anglican Religious Communities Year Book 2006-7
Fifth International Edition
Foreword by Archbishop Desmond Tutu

A window into the wider world of Anglican religious life, this comprises a directory of communities, a section for news, stimulating articles, a daily cycle of prayer for communities, illustrated with photos, attractively produced by Canterbury Press.

Price and ISBN to be announced when available; publication date: August 2005. Familiarity with a previous edition is not a substitute for possession of this one, which includes latest developments.

Please support this venture by buying a copy, and one for a friend!

Epistle of Paul to the Philippians, through Bible study in small groups and keynote addresses to the whole conference, including one given by **Angelo**. This year's conference happened during the school holidays so children were present, a new element. **Augustine Thomas** and **Maximilian** organised morning activities for them and at the end of the week the children gave a very moving presentation on how they had looked at the theme.

The afternoons were taken up with optional seminars on various subjects, including two from **Paschal**, one of which was on 'The Religious Life - everything you wanted to know'. Some of the Religious present formed a panel and answered questions and also encouraged all to pray for, and seek out, vocations. The panel was wide in terms of age, experience and religious charism.

The conference worship was again uplifting and enriching, the most moving part of each day being the time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament at midday with 600 Anglicans in silence for an hour!

◆◆ Round up

Following the closure of the Dundee house on 26 May, **Amos** has moved to St Martin's Vicarage, Plaistow and **Moyra** to St Francis House, Birmingham. **Bernard** has moved to Hilfield; **Nathanael** is expected to move to Doncaster in September and **Reginald** to Canterbury in October. **Martin** will move to Stepney and **Samuel** to Hilfield following the closure of the Cambridge house in early October. In May, **Jude** took up office as the Minister Provincial of the brothers in the Province of the Americas for a term of three years. The Bishop of Gloucester, **Michael Perham** has been elected to succeed **Michael Scott-Joynt** as Bishop Protector for all three orders of SSF in the European Province when the latter's term of office ends in November. **John** made his Profession in First Vows on 16 May. **Maximilian** has been elected to Life Profession and the ceremony was expected to be in August. **Jason** has been released from life vows and membership of SSF. f

Hilfield Friary 2005

Stigmata Festival 17 September

beginning with a Eucharist
at 12 Noon;
concluding with Evening Prayer at
5.00

*Please bring a packed lunch
- drinks provided.*

*

Pre-Advent Quiet Day 26 November, 10 - 4

led by a Brother SSF

*Please bring a packed lunch;
and advise the Friary Secretary
if you wish to attend*

*

*For more information about these or
any other events at Hilfield, please
contact*

**The Friary Secretary TSSF,
The Friary, Hilfield, Dorchester,
Dorset DT2 7BE**

Phone 01300 341345

hilfieldssf@franciscans.org.uk

Compton Durville 2005

Quiet Days from 10-4

(Please bring a packed lunch)

Tuesday 18th October : Coolibah

Saturday 3 December: Advent

*

Gardeners Practical and Prayerful:

13-16 September

*

Prayer Workshop: 9-11 September

*

Christmas with the Community

Fri 23 Dec (4pm) - Tues 27 Dec
(10am); Priest: a Sister CSF

*

Individually Guided Retreats

are available; please ask for details

*

Please book for all events.

*For the programme for 2005-6 or
more details of the above, contact:
The Guest Sister, Compton Durville,
South Petherton, Somerset
TA13 5ES*

Phone 01460 240473 or email
comptondurvillecsf@franciscans.org.uk

Book Reviews



Piers McGrandle
**Trevor Huddleston -
 Turbulent Priest**
 ISBN 0 864 7123 4
 Continuum, London,
 2004, £16.99

Trevor was one of the great figures of the second half of the twentieth century. It is strange to think he only lived in South Africa for 13 years, his impact both on Church and country was so enormous. More than any other single person he made the evil of apartheid public to the world. His impact on England in the four years after he returned in 1956 was equally great and to this day you meet people who were at school or university at that time and whose lives were changed by an encounter with Trevor. Trevor made Christianity relevant to a generation who (like all younger generations) were thinking it had lost its relevance. He made all of us aware that Christianity and politics could not and must not be separated, that racism and active collusion with unjust governments were sinful.

Trevor was hated in South Africa because he made this connection. He was also loved greatly by thousands of black people, and some whites, because he made public what so many others were trying to keep private. It was his priesthood and his prayer that gave power and infinite resource to do what he was doing. Why then was he recalled in 1956? McGrandle handles this well, showing that there were a wide range of reasons contributing to Trevor's recall, not one of which would have been sufficient. It was probably the single most devastating thing that ever happened to Trevor. It broke him, but also made him into a new kind of person. For forty years after that he lived on a world stage, as the author of *Naught for your Comfort*, as Bishop of Masasi, Stepney and Mauritius, as President of the Anti-Apartheid Society.

McGrandle tells the story well. His book is readable and the Trevor who appears in it is one it is easy to recognize. It is not exhaustive but he tells the tale of Trevor's childhood and student time well with good anecdotal evidence. He shows how typical Trevor was of a class and generation which England produced and how he broke out from its constraints. It would have been nice if more of the delightful character of Trevor's company could have been portrayed. Trevor's friends loved him, even though he treated them badly on occasion when he was tired or ill. He was a most amusing companion and enjoyed talking about books, music, life, history and the wickedness of the English establishment, of which he was so much a part.

McGrandle has not been well served by his editors. The book contains many mistakes and at some points the usually good writing

lapses into confusion. I trust any reprint will be well corrected.

Nicolas Stebbing CR

(Edited and reprinted with permission from *Quarterly Review* of the Community of the Resurrection).

Desmond Tutu
God has a Dream
 ISBN 1 844 13237 4
 Rider Press, £12.99 hb; £7.99 pb
 Audiobook on CD:
 ISBN 0975263102
 Maui Media LLC, 2004, £17.99

When I met Desmond Tutu, at a conference more than a dozen years ago, he told us that as we are all made in the image of God, we should be genuflecting to each other. From this belief, this attitude, has sprung this book. His title echoes the words of Martin Luther King - but in this case God has the dream and wants our help in realising it, in transforming the world so there shall be more laughter, joy and peace, justice, goodness, compassion and love. Each chapter begins, "Dear Child of God", which in a book by any other author would be cloying sentimentality; but here one can hear his voice saying it, which robs the phrase of any sickliness.

As Christians, we do not regard one another merely as equals but as brothers and sisters, as one family. Tutu uses the African word ubuntu to describe our interdependence, the way our humanity is inextricably twined together, bound up with others in the bundle of life. Yet to love our brothers, our sisters, we must love ourselves, and to do that we must know that God loves us. Tutu says, 'at the risk of getting myself into trouble, I will say that in a sense it actually doesn't matter what we do. For nothing we can do, no matter how bad, will change God's love for us.' This means that '... as much as God loves you, God equally loves your enemies.'

There are many anecdotes, as illustration, from his years of ministry in South Africa and from the more intimate life of his family. But this is not an autobiography nor a memoir, and these personal stories are not overused. A naughty sense of humour escapes occasionally.

And to end: 'Human beings must be held in awe and reverence ... We should really genuflect before one another.'

Sandra Hancock TSSF

Shirley Williams
God and Caesar
Personal Reflections on Politics and Religion
 ISBN 0-8264-7103-X
 Continuum, 2004, £7.99

Shirley Williams writes as she speaks, with clear values based on her Christian convictions. As a practising Catholic with a political edge she is ready to challenge some of the ethical traditions of her Church; as a Christian politician she challenges her colleagues both in Britain and America. Her personal track-record adds considerable

strength to her calls for change. Her experience as a politician has taught her that a holder of a cabinet position - or even whole governments - cannot in themselves cause effective change. Between the lines of this refreshing book is the belief that 'the only lasting achievement lies in changing people... (and) what changes them, as Jesus repeatedly told us, is love' (p. 145).

In eight very readable chapters, Williams explores the relationship between Christian teaching, the Christian churches and public life in the modern world. She tidily explains her conviction in favour of the European Community, argues her belief that the Americans would have been wiser to have defined the war against terrorism as against 'crimes against humanity', and is deeply concerned about the poverty of the world and spread of AIDS. Through these and many other contemporary issues in which Shirley Williams has first hand experience, the reader is led into the real world, where statistics are used helpfully and there are no false promises.

Shirley Williams fought ten General Elections and served for sixteen years as an MP, for five of them as a Cabinet Minister. 'I am neither a moral philosopher nor a theologian', she declares, claiming to speak with 'only the authority of experience'. From her place in the House of Lords, as a vice-President of CAFOD, and as an accredited lecturer in America, Russia, South Africa, she has gained a world of experience.

Damian SSF

Br. Reginald SSF
**Common Worship Psalms and Canticles,
 simply pointed for singing.**
 ISBN 0 9534826 5 7
 Sarum College Press, 2005, £11.95
 (Accompaniments for the tones are also
 available at £1.25)

The singing of psalms has been an integral part of worship for over 3,000 years. Psalms express, in vivid terms, the worshipper's experience of God including joy in His presence, (O be joyful in the Lord) - despair when He seems far off (How long will you forget me, O Lord, for ever?) - sorrow for sin (Be merciful to me, O God) and outbursts of praise (Blessed be the Lord my rock).

Jesus and his disciples sang a psalm at the end of the Last Supper and Christians have sung them ever since. They were meant to be sung by all the people of God, not just by trained choirs, and many attempts have been made over the years to enable them to be sung by congregations. Paraphrases have been popular for hundreds of years (All people that on earth do dwell) and there have been legions of pointed Psalters in more recent times, but many seem to call for careful rehearsal before they can be sung successfully.

But Brother Reginald, in collaboration with Robert Fielding of Sarum College, Salisbury, has produced a version of the Psalms and a selection of Canticles from *Common Worship* which can be sung

immediately by any congregation. The pointing is of the simplest kind and the tuneful chants can be sung after only one hearing. They have either two or four notes per quarter, which makes them readily available to everyone. The presentation of the Psalter in a spiral binding makes it easy to handle and the type face is clear.

This Psalter should be investigated by every church where congregational singing is encouraged. It's a winner!

Available from Sarum College Bookshop, 19 The close, Salisbury, Wilts. SP1 2EE (post free in the UK).

John Bertalot

*Former organist and Director of Music at
Blackburn Cathedral*

John H. Darch and Stuart K Burns

Saints on Earth:

**A Biographical Companion to Common
Worship**

ISBN 0 7151 4036 1

*Church House Publishing, London,
2004, £20*

Does *Common Worship* really need another book of hagiographies? After all, with already published works such as *Exciting Holiness* with its additional readings and prayers, and *Celebrating the Saints* with its sampling of writings for each of the people, in the revised Calendar, the market for another book is quite slim.

The authors, taking the paucity of the biographies of those termed 'lesser saints' in *Exciting Holiness* as their starting point would say that there is room for another volume. Add to this the potential for including this material as an update to the church software programme *Visual Liturgy* they may have a point.

The biographies themselves are indeed fuller than in other volumes and the authors take especial care to give a picture of those whose lives have not been well recorded previously. Naturally, the stories are coloured by the history of the authors; the dedication of the book is to the students of St John's College, Nottingham. This is shown by a tendency to transform some widely accepted miracles of the saints into legend. An example from the biography of Clare describes the well-known story of her defending Assisi from attack by a display of the Blessed Sacrament as 'visible prayers in front of the attacking army'. I found this an awkward approach; it may open the reading of these biographies to those of a more evangelical church practice but such unacknowledged editing may add confusion as to the authenticity of particular incidents - a practice all too common amongst hagiographers down the ages.

The book is not complete without the CD-Rom it contains. This is an update for version 4 of *Visual Liturgy*, taking the material in the book and incorporating it into all aspects of *Visual Liturgy*. This enables users to add biographical material into service sheets and pew bulletins. A word of caution before installing the disc: it will help

to make certain that *Visual Liturgy* has been updated online and that you do not have resident some McAfee peripherals such as Clean Sweep. I did not check these and had several interesting weeks trying to get my whole system running correctly again. Once this is done all works well. For those who do not use *Visual Liturgy* the CD-Rom also contains PDF files that may be printed separately.

The biggest failing of this book is that the Calendar is not complete. It intentionally does not include the major biblical saints and awkward times such as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the Advent 'O's'. These are included in the index but a note of their passing in the text, set out in date order, would remind readers to look elsewhere for them.

Andrew Dotchin TSSF

Fr Jimmy Collins

Soft Blows the Wind

On Foot to Walsingham

ISBN 0 85244 569 5

Gracewing, 2003, £7.99

At seventy-eight years of age, Fr Jimmy Collins resigned from his parish of St Joseph the Worker, Kirkby, in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Fr Jimmy wanted to mark somehow two gifts from God: his priesthood, and the presence of the Blessed Virgin throughout his life. He decided to walk to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. This was intended to be a pilgrimage of personal thanksgiving, with no support or publicity. Fr Jimmy would say Mass each day and recite the Rosary as he walked. After the pilgrimage, he wrote out his experiences, with no intention of publishing them. However, at the repeated requests of friends who read them, he eventually agreed to the publication of the book.

The first half of the book follows Fr Jimmy on his pilgrimage. His various encounters and experiences along the way inspire reflections on aspects of his life and Christian ministry as a priest. The second half contains the thirty two sections of the route, with good basic maps and instructions. There are also helpful lists of information centres and suggested accommodation en route. The introduction provides a brief history of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, and an account of its restoration which is specifically from a Roman Catholic perspective. The focus of this book however is not the shrine itself, but rather the pilgrimage to it.

This book would make a good companion for parts or all of the pilgrimage route, practically and inspirationally, by sharing in some of Fr Jimmy's journey. Pilgrimage, journeying with Our Lord in penitence and with purpose, seems thankfully to be once again in the ascendancy. What better route to take, than one that leads to what is, by popular agreement, the most holy place in England.

Maximilian SSF

W.H. Vanstone
Fare Well In Christ
ISBN 0-232-52601-X
D,L,T. £9.95

This is a new edition of Vanstone's third book, which appeared in 1997. Readers of his other volumes - *Love's Endeavour*, *Love's Expense* (1979), and *The Stature of Waiting* (1982) - waited (!) fifteen years for his last word.

The message is perhaps less closely defined than in the earlier works, but there is a central theme - 'grace'. The opening chapter lays the foundation by tracing 'grace' from its Sanskrit origin through Greek and Latin to its English manifestation as 'grace' - something gladly given, gratefully received.

We move on to consider the power of stories, in particular the gospels, in the transmitting of grace, and the sign of the cross when even stories fail.

Chapter 3, 'The Grace of Jesus Christ', reminds us that Jesus' call to repentance was not a summons to placate the wrath of God, but a grace calling for responding generosity and joy. Chapter 4, 'The Ministry of Grace', is a study of grace in the life of Jesus' followers then and now. Chapter 5 in which Vanstone bids the reader fare well follows grace through the realm of story into the ultimate destination of mystery.

It has to be said that this is not a book for 'the young man in a hurry'. It is to be read a page or two at a time. Many of the author's own stories are from war service or from his experience as a curate - stories of a young man, but living in a vanished world, and written in the familiar endearingly pedantic Vanstone style. If you missed *Fare Well in Christ* first time round, here is an opportunity. Here is good, solid, Anglican nourishment.

Anselm SSF

Hilfield Friary Shop

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The shop stocks religious books, including many with a Franciscan theme.

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A large variety of good quality cards, postcards, candles, sweatshirts, tee-shirts, gifts and Traidcraft goods is also on sale.

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A Hermit in the City

Sister Catherine Joy CSF lives as a hermit and is the Anglican Chaplain on the Inter-Faith and Spiritual Care Team at a maximum security psychiatric hospital.

Tell us about the relationship between your work and your prayer, the balance of your life.

Balance, baloney! Something balanced is going nowhere, unless you're on a bicycle, but I fell off that.

The art of juggling, now that might work better, but I'll stick with balance.

Sometimes prayer is more weighted. At other times it's work. The scales may tip in favour of sleep one day, gardening or reading or piano playing the next. It may be that silence and aloneness heave in heaviest for a while and then flip suddenly into feasting with friends.....

..... to be as good a (hermit) as I can and to remain myself and to write about it. To put myself down on paper with the most complete simplicity and integrity, masking nothing, confusing no issue: this is very hard because I am all mixed up with illusions and attachments ... no need for breast beating and lamentation before the eyes of anyone but You, O God, who see the depths of my fatuity...

Tom Merton wrote that, not me, but he does put it so darn well.

If this more solitary trek is teaching me anything at all, it is that my own schlapp through life lies in the desert of ordinariness - kicking at the empty cans of my own rubbish, the litter of illusion; manoeuvring around the clutter of accumulated trash, the debris of self-deceit and aggrandizement; watching the wrappers of discarded beliefs and silly ideas, relinquished so reluctantly, blown away by the crafty, playful wind of the Spirit. Just very occasionally the light hits a broken piece of something lying in the dust (perhaps another shattered image?) and transforms it into prismatic beauty, a glint, a hint of something hidden there in the shards.

And, guess what? The boxes are disappearing one by one. They have been for many years. First they were prized open (and believe me, this did *not* feel like gifts at

Christmas) and the contents emptied out and now there aren't even any boxes anymore! Nothing to clutch, hold hold on to.

Could be liberation. It often feels more like emptiness, lost-ness, the verge of terror, mystery. One step closer?

My icon for this solitary escapade has always been Jesus' descent into hell. What I understand to be his total immersion in the land of our human 'unlikeness', that experience where the vacuum or narcissism sucks the light right out of our soul. The people I work with often tell me that hell is here on earth. Have you ever been close to the fringes of your own hell? I have been driven to the brink of my own Pit on a number of occasions and at the time I did not find Jesus waiting there to hoist me out at the time, that is, but looking back...

And so this icon leaps off the wall; leaves its cosy place before candles and incense and arrives in the eyes of a man peering at me, piercing me with his agonized gaze through a faeces-smeared slit in his isolation cell door.

One solitary looks at another.

I can never enter this man's nightmare world of damaged psyche; never know the experience of his childhood's horrific abuse; never claim his genetic pre-disposition to severe mental illness, nor his battle with uncontrollable rage and unbearable pain; never hear the voices that plague him or know that terrifying alienation from self. I can, and do, extend my hand to him as far as I can reach... through that narrow way in the door.to my brother on the other side.

'I cannot withdraw from the mess people are in.'... Well, I guess, neither can I. (That was Merton again, by the way.)

Every day at this work, I am challenged. Where is hope? What is good news here? Is there any way to send the peace of Christ to calm those terrified eyes? Some balm from God to ease that broken heart of my brother solitary, staring at me through that foul window slit?

'Here, I must constantly revise all my absurdities.' (Merton again) and I will add, all my 'religious' head trips. Both feet firmly on the ground, hand reaching out in friendship, bound together by God's compassion, well, I believe that, but this man has probably never tasted anything remotely akin to compassion in his life.

'Everything that affects you builds you into a (hermit) as long as you do not insist on doing the work yourself and building your own kind of hermitage.' (Tom, again. I'll have to say that he is proving to be a good companion.)

Now, here is something from a very learned

man, the Revd. Dr. John Swinton. He is writing about the friendships of Jesus in the context of mental health care:

'Jesus sat with those who were radically unlike him. He resurrected their personhood through the relationship of friendship. It strikes me that this model of friendship draws us back to the reality that all mental health care is profoundly personal and in one sense deeply counter-cultural being sociable to anti-social individuals carries a potential risk, just as befriending lepers did in the middle ages. But if we don't offer it, who will?'

This offer of friendship to the profoundly, severely mentally ill is part of my life at the moment.

Clinging to the living rock of this God of Life; grafted onto the Christ Vine - my soul is held fast by a captivating mystery while my life dances to the rhythms of the Spirit: now inner certainty, then paralyzing doubt - of everything; swept up next into joy shot through with anguish for the groaning of creation; my body, now full of creative energy, now too weary even to pray; longings, deep yearnings for this God whose very existence my ever present agnosticism questions, then down into the arid absence of all desire; then laughter with friends followed by intense listening to the wounded and my own heart bleeding just a little.

*Everything that affects
you builds you into a
(hermit) as long as you do
not insist on doing the work
yourself and building your
own kind of hermitage.
Thomas Merton*

Sunlight dappling new leaves. My first spring in this garden. I am delighted by the loveliness it is unfolding for me: foxgloves, daffodils and a myriad blue, bluebells. A single iris and the green spears of gladioli pushing through.

The ugliness of this neighbourhood and the warmth and friendly characters who live in it.

Here I am, in the middle of it all.....

Such is my solitary endeavour, at present.

I'd like my friend Merton to have the last word:

'For of all people, the solitary knows least where she is going and yet she is more sure, for there is one thing she cannot doubt: she travels where God is leading her. That is precisely why she doesn't know the way. That too is why, to most other men and women, the way is something of a scandal.'

With apologies to Tom for a little editing here and there. f

*Every day at this
work, I am challenged.
Where is hope? What is
good news here? Is there any
way to send the peace of
Christ to calm those terrified
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